

# Intra-Communal Violence in Southwest Russia and the Government's Reaction to Extremism

By: Peter J. Marzalik

Advisors: Dr. Jeffrey Lewis and Dr. Anthony Mughan

Denman Undergraduate  
Research Forum  
28 March 2013

Undergraduate International Studies Program, The Ohio State University, 1885 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210

## Incident

- terrorist attacks in Kazan, Tatarstan on 19 July 2012
  - car bombing wounded Mufti Ildus Faizov, head of the Muslim community in Kazan
  - multiple shootings killed Deputy Vailulla Yakupov, head of the Muslim Educational Department in Kazan
  - Mujahedeen of Tatarstan claimed responsibility
  - extremists' outrage over moderate prescriptions on Islamic fundamentalism of religious leaders**
- "These events remind us once again that the situation in our country is far from ideal. What has happened is a serious signal" – Russian President Vladimir Putin



## History

- Ancient Rus and The Golden Horde**
- Tatars and Bashkirs, Turkic peoples descended from the Bulgars who arrived at the region in the 7<sup>th</sup> century
- Genghis Khan led **Mongol-Tatar invasion**, conquering all lands of Ancient Rus and Bulgar Empire by 1242
- Tsar Ivan IV defeated The Golden Horde, seizing control of the Khanate of Kazan in 1552
- Tsarist Rule over the Russian Empire**
- Peter the Great conducted "civilizing mission" to Muslim-dominated areas of empire
- **Native aristocracies including Tatar nobility integrated into Russian system**
- Catherine the Great passed some policies of religious toleration but exception to oppressive autocratic rule
- Ethnic minorities as inferiors culturally and economically
- Ethnic Nationalism during the Soviet Union**
- Nationality policy of Lenin granted limited autonomy
- Great Purges of Stalin demanded Soviet cultural assimilation, collectivization of agriculture, and forced resettlement for ethnic minorities
- **Secret publications of dissenting Tatars and Bashkirs**
- Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, provided breeding ground for growth of Islamic militancy
- Islamic Fundamentalism in Russian Federation**
- Russian constitution **granted full autonomy** under federalist system to Tatarstan and Bashkortostan
- First (1994-96) and Second (1999-2009) Chechen Wars
- Rise of Islamic fundamentalism in North Caucasus



## Research Questions

- 1) Is there a growing trend of nationalist fervor and Islamic radicalization in the autonomous republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan?
- 2) Is the Russian government actively working to suppress a supposed rise in extremism in these two regions?

## Methodology

### Constant Comparative Content Analysis:

- rigorous method of analysis in **qualitative research** using process of inductive reasoning
- choose one incident, critically examine all relatable data, **extrapolate new meaning** or trend
- review **news articles** in original Russian and secondary source translations for accuracy
- media **censorship** in Russia represents important potential confounding factor

**Incident:** "Terrorist attack rocks Tatarstan's religious community"  
Russia Beyond The Headlines, 19 July 2012

### Trend #1: Increase of Radicalization

- 1) "Black Banner Over Kazan"  
Current Digest of the Russian Press, 13 August 2012  
**Key:** Demonstration of 200 nationalist separatists calling for secession of Tatarstan from Russia
- 2) "Bashkortostan Becomes New Russian "Hot Spot"  
Jamestown Foundation, 10 December 2012  
**Key:** Federal Security Service (FSB) dispatched to suppress nationalist band formations
- 3) "Tatar Youth Organization Seeks to Bolster Tatar Nationalism"  
Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 22 January 2013  
**Key:** Azatlyk ("Freedom") youth group stoking nationalist fervor, declaring 2013 the year of a famous Tatar revolutionary to revive history of glory

### Trend #2: Reaction of Government

- 1) "Radical Islamic Attacks in a Moderate Region Unnerve the Kremlin"  
New York Times, 25 August 2012  
**Key:** Dozens of Muslim men rounded up and arrested by federal authorities
- 2) "Moscow Patriarchate Expands Missionary Work among Non-Russians"  
Jamestown Foundation, 8 February 2013  
**Key:** Missionary work of Orthodox Church projects power of Russian government
- 3) "Authorities See Salafi Groups Popping Up Everywhere Inside Russia"  
Gazeta.SPB, 14 February 2013  
**Key:** Detained 271 Muslims suspected to be involved in terrorist and extremist activities in St. Petersburg

## Preliminary Results

- 1) As expressed through the strong rhetoric and protest activities of youth nationalist groups like Azatlyk ("Freedom"), the **sentiment of frustration** exists in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, which often provides **motivation for radicalization**.
- 2) Many of these youth nationalist groups study the literature and practices of **Hizb Ut-Tahrir** (HT), a non-violent banned pan-Islamic organization active throughout Central Asia and Southwest Russia with intellectual **links to terrorism**.
- 3) As exhibited by the activities of the Federal Security Services (FSB), the Russian government **fears and exaggerates the spread of extremism** from the North Caucasus to the Volga region, justifying their **indiscriminate arrests** in the name of national security.
- 4) Internal conflicts of Russia pose risks for 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, resetting relations with the United States, and **international stability** in Central Asia.



## Future Research

- Critically analyze **5-7 Russian articles** per research question to establish proof of trends for increased radicalization and government response
- Collect additional quantitative and qualitative data by conducting **survey work** in the cities of Kazan and Ufa and by **interviewing** political officials throughout Tatarstan and Bashkortostan

## References

- De Hartog, Leo. *Russia and the Mongol Yoke*. London: British Academy Press, 1996. Print.
- Hosking, Geoffrey Alan. *Empire and Nation in Russian History*. Waco, Texas: Markham Press Fund, 1973. Print.
- Rashid, Ahmed. *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*. Yale University Press: 2002. Print.
- Schaefer, Robert W. *The Insurgency in Chechnya and the North Caucasus: From Gazavat to Jihad*. Westport, CT: ABC-CLIO, 2010. Print.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor. *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*. Stanford University Press: 2003. Print.
- Zisserman-Brodsky, Dina. *Constructing Ethnopolitics in the Soviet Union: Samizdat, Deprivation, and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Print.

Verifying

Modifying

Importing

Modifying

© 2013  
2117  
Berke  
poste